

**Interagency Wildfire Management Team  
Meeting Notes  
April 9, 2003**

Diana Webb (Office of the Associate Director for Operations, LANL) and Doug Tucker were interviewed by KRSN, the Los Alamos radio station, on wildfire issues. Diana is also serving as the Chairperson for the LANL Site Management Council.

Phil Taylor (Emergency Manager, Los Alamos County) solicited opinions from the IWMT on the merits of establishing a Community Emergency Response Team.

Doug Tucker (Los Alamos County Fire Department) and Phil Taylor reviewed the thinning operation that is currently being conducted in Potrillo Canyon, west of White Rock. They found that the prescriptions and their implementations are within acceptable bounds, but that rehabilitation efforts would benefit from more prompt implementation. Doug pointed out that LANL is not the only local agency that is following these types of prescriptions, and that the County is implementing similar prescriptions on their lands. Doug also distributed information on bark beetles that is available at [www.barkbeetles.org](http://www.barkbeetles.org). Finally, Doug indicated that the latest version of the National Fire Plan places more emphasis on wildland-urban interface issues. The current rule-of-thumb for the widths of fuel breaks is at least one-quarter of a mile.

Susan DiMauro (Davey Resource Group) announced that appointments will be scheduled for planners to visit properties in selected neighborhoods of Los Alamos to create defensible space designs. Appointments will begin to be scheduled for North Mesa on April 21, and for the Walnut Canyon and central Los Alamos areas on May 19.

Patrick Valerio (Ecology Group, LANL) reported that the Ecology Group and LANL are considering what is necessary to assess the current wildfire hazard conditions at LANL and to determine actions that still need to be implemented.

Todd Haagenstad (Ecology Group, LANL) announced that the selection of the Group Leader for the Ecology Group is in progress. Todd also reported that Sam Loftin reviewed the status of the thinning in Potrillo Canyon, west of White Rock, and found that this work is consistent with the prescriptions and management guidelines. Finally, Todd announced that the next East Jemez Resource Council (EJRC) meeting will be held on the morning of May 1 in the Ecology Group's conference room.

Fran Talley (Public Affairs Office, LANL) reported that KRSN will broadcast the Wildfire 2003 public meeting. This public meeting will be held on April 15 from 5 PM to 9 PM at the Graves Hall of the United Church (2525 Canyon Road). The meeting will include posters, displays, demonstrations and oral presentations from the Nature Conservancy, Los Alamos County, Bandelier National Monument, Los Alamos National Laboratory and Davey Resource Group.

Randy Balice (Ecology Group, LANL) recently attended two meetings conducted by the Joint Fire Science Program. The first meeting was the Principal Investigator Workshop. At this meeting Randy and Carl Edminster coauthored a paper entitled "Cerro Grande Post-fire

Recovery: Interactions with Climate". The second meeting was a Wildland Fire Workshop for Outlining Research Priorities in the Southwest. Some of the high-priority issues identified at the workshop include determination of the effectiveness of fuels and rehabilitation treatments, conditions conducive to the initiation or disruption of crown fires, effectiveness of BAER treatments in the mitigation of soil erosion and flooding, impacts of fire on threatened and endangered species, understanding of climate effects on vegetation fuels and fire hazards, effects of tree mortality on fire behavior, and issues related to complex social interactions for reducing fire hazards across multiple agency boundaries and in the wildland-urban interface.

Rob Farris (Fire Protection Group, LANL) announced the distribution of a LANL alert for Restrictions Due to Wildland Fire Conditions. The alert urges all LANL employees to be very cautious when conducting activities that could result in igniting a wildland fire and itemizes restrictions on selected activities. The alert also contains a Wildland Fire Danger Work Restriction Matrix. For further information, contact the LANL Fire Marshal at 667-9045 or the Emergency Management and Response Group at 667-6211.

Dean Clark (Bandelier National Monument) is investigating the potential for sharing the costs of maintaining the helicopter during the upcoming fire season.

Manny L'Esperance (Emergency Management and Response, LANL) reported through the LANL Fire Danger Estimate notification system that the fire danger levels at LANL are high to very high. The 1-hour and 10-hour fuel moistures are from 3.5 percent to 5 percent. The 1000-hour fuel moistures are 11 percent to 15 percent.

The Climate Assessment for the Southwest project (CLIMAS), located at the University of Arizona's Institute for the Study of Planet Earth, reports through its March 2003 information packet that recent storms have eased short-term drought across the Southwest. The greatest precipitation totals have been across western and central Arizona, and north-central New Mexico. Long-term, hydrological drought is still a major concern for the Southwest. Reservoir levels remain below average. Snowpack has increased over the course of last month, but remains below average except in northeastern New Mexico. For more information, see <http://www.ispe.arizona.edu/climas/forecasts.html>

The next IWMT meeting will be at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, April 23, at TA-21, Building 210 in the RRES-ECO Conference Room (142). The IWMT meets every other week and these meetings are open to the public. Contact Randy Balice ([balice@lanl.gov](mailto:balice@lanl.gov), 665-1270) for further information, or to get on the distribution list for these meeting notes.